

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A computer network-based method for facilitating commerce at a remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, the method comprising:

authorizing a plurality of remote seller participants to post, using a computer application program executing on a computer system associated with the plurality of remote seller participants, ~~an~~ a plurality of items for auction at ~~an internet auction site~~ the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, wherein the remote seller participants are authorized to operate a computer application program to coordinate asynchronous generation and scheduling of automated ascending bid auction instances in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system while the computer application program is isolated from communication with the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

retrieving information about a topographical structure of the remote internet based-auction system from a data repository while the computer application program is isolated from communication with the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

providing a selection of topographical categories and sub-categories for inputting data to build a data record of the plurality of items that will be subsequently posted into the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, the selection of the topographical categories and sub-categories based at least in part from the information about the topographical structure of the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system retrieved from the data repository to assure proper linkage into the topographical structure maintained by the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system when the computer application program subsequently communicates the data record of the items to create the automated ascending bid

auction instances for the plurality of items at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

providing one or more data input fields to receive from the plurality of remote participant sellers a title and a subjective textual description for the plurality of items;

generating a data header that contains a user identification code corresponding to the plurality of remote participant sellers and an authorization password for the data record created for the plurality of items;

receiving at a communication handler program executing on a host computer system housing the remote topically arranged internet based-auction system, information from the computer application program executing on the seller participant's computer system about the plurality of items to be auctioned, the received information including comprising the selection of topographical categories and sub-categories, the title, and the subjective textual description of the plurality of items, and the data header; a designation of a category, selected by the seller participant from a list of categories displayed on the seller participant's computer system, under which the item is to be auctioned

processing the received information at the host computer system housing the remote internet based-auction system into a presentation format with a database to presentation format formatting program, the presentation format including an indication of the category of the item to be auctioned; comprising scheduling information received from the seller participant operating the computer application program to (a) post the data record in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system to initiate the automated ascending bid auction instances at the remote topically arranged internet-based computer system, (b) designate a time at which the computer application program will contact the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system to post at least one data record to initiate the automated ascending bid auction instance for the at least one data record at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, or (c) post the data record in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system designating the plurality of items as on-hold awaiting the automated ascending bid auction instance start date at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

presenting the presentation formatted information to a plurality of bidding internet participants; and

receiving at the host computer system at least one bid for the ~~the-auctioned~~ plurality of items from at least one of the plurality of bidding internet participants.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
receiving at the host computer system payment information from the plurality of bidding internet participants.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
opening an auction process to the plurality of internet buyer participants; and  
automatically closing the auction process to the plurality of bidding internet participants based on a predetermined condition.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
receiving the bid for the ~~the-auctioned~~ plurality of items via a world-wide web page server interface.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 further comprising:  
receiving payment information from the plurality of bidding internet participants,  
the received payment information being associated with the received bid.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15 further comprising:  
wherein the payment information received from the plurality of bidding internet participants includes ~~information identifying a credit card account information~~, and ~~further comprising~~ passing the credit card account information to a clearinghouse and receiving authorization from the clearinghouse that payment information ~~with the credit card~~ has cleared.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
receiving payment information from the plurality of bidding internet participants;  
clearing the payment information and transferring legal ownership of the plurality of items to the plurality of bidding internet participants.

18. (New) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

receiving input from the plurality of remote participant sellers at the computer application program to designate whether the plurality of items may be viewed by an open audience of the plurality of bidding internet participants in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system prior to the initiation of the automated ascending bid auction instance or whether the plurality of items may not be viewed by the plurality of bidding internet participants in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system prior to the initiation of the automated ascending bid auction instance.

19. (New) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

receiving updates from the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system about the topographical structure maintained by the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system and storing the updated topographical structure in a file accessible to the computer application program while the computer application program is not in communication with the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system.

20. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein the initiation of the automated ascending bid auction instance by the computer application program opens an ascending bid auction process to an open audience of a plurality of bidding internet participants at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, and wherein the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system automatically closes the ascending bid auction process to the plurality of bidding internet participants based on a predetermined condition.

21. (New) A computer network based-system operative to facilitate commerce at an internet-based auction, the computer network based-system comprising:

a computer system executing a computer application program operative to authorizing a plurality of remote seller participants to post, using a computer application program executing on a computer system associated with the plurality of remote seller participants, a plurality of items for auction at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system,

wherein the remote seller participants are authorized to operate a computer application program to coordinate asynchronous generation and scheduling of automated ascending bid auction instances in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system while the computer application program is isolated from communication with the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

the computer application program retrieving information about a topographical structure of the remote internet based-auction system from a data repository while the computer application program is isolated from communication with the remote topically arranged internet based auction system;

a database stored in the computer system having a structure corresponding to the topographical structure of the remote internet based-auction system including a selection of topographical categories and sub-categories for the topical arrangement of multiple auction instances by the plurality of seller participants;

the computer application program further including a user interface program operative to provide to the plurality of seller participants the selection of topographical categories and sub-categories for inputting data to build a data record of the plurality of items that will be subsequently posted into the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, the selection of the topographical categories and sub-categories based at least in part from the information about the topographical structure of the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system retrieved from the data repository to assure proper linkage into the topographical structure maintained by the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system when the computer application program subsequently communicates the data record of the items to create the automated ascending bid auction instances for the plurality of items at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

the user interface program operative to provide one or more data input fields to receive from the plurality of remote participant sellers a title and a subjective textual description for the plurality of items;

the computer system generating a data header that contains a user identification code corresponding to the plurality of remote participant sellers and an authorization password for the data record created for the plurality of items;

a communication handler program executing on a host computer system housing the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system receiving information from the computer application program executing on the computer system about the plurality of items to be auctioned, the received information comprising the selection of topographical categories and sub-categories, the title and the subjective textual description of the plurality of items, and the data header;

the handler program further processing the received information at the host computer system housing the remote internet based-auction system into a presentation format comprising scheduling information received from the seller participant operating the computer application program to (a) post the data record in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system to initiate the automated ascending bid auction instances at the remote topically arranged internet-based computer system, (b) designate a time at which the computer application program will contact the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system to post at least one data record to initiate the automated ascending bid auction instance for the at least one data record at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system, or (c) post the data record in the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system designating the plurality of items as on-hold awaiting the automated ascending bid auction instance start date at the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system;

the host computer system further presenting the presentation formatted information to a plurality of bidding internet participants, and receiving at least one bid for the plurality of items from at least one of the plurality of bidding internet participants.

22. (New) The computer network based-system of claim 21, wherein the computer system further provides a sales format selection mode comprising a selection between at least an ascending bid auction format and a fixed price format, the ascending bid auction format providing at least a manual auction start mode or a scheduled start mode to start the plurality of items for auction at one or both of a selected start date and a start time when the plurality of items are subsequently posted into the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system.

23. (New) The computer network based-system of claim 21, wherein the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system determines whether the plurality of remote seller participants are authorized remote seller participants by retrieving the user identification code from the data header of the data record generated and transferred to the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system.

24. (New) The computer network based-system of claim 21, wherein the computer application program executing on the computer system is operative to receive a data message from the remote topically arranged internet-based auction system that the plurality of remote seller participants are not authorized remote seller participants.